1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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614 554 Uru *warage* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *kangalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 826 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

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535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

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betel bags and strike-a-lights may all be buried in the graves of male "Culture Veddas," and in one such grave they even found bullets[1].

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When an attempt is made to discover the nature of the noxious influence felt in the place of death, the usual answer given is to the effect that "if we stayed where the death had occurred we should be pelted with stones." Further questions made it clear that in many instances there was no definite idea that some part of the dead man was the active agent in the stone-throwing; on the other hand some Veddas, and these as far as we could judge some of the least contaminated, definitely believed that it was the spirit or *yaka* of the dead man who would cause stones to rain on anybody staying near the corpse. And in this instance it was admittedly fear of the spirit of the dead individual that caused them to hurry from the site of death. Stone-throwing is the usual method by which the *yaku* show their displeasure, using *yaku* in the broadest sense, and by no means limiting this term to the spirits of the recent dead. It was clear that during certain disturbances described as "stone-throwing" no actual rocks or stones were moved or fell, and this was recognised by the Veddas who, however, continued to speak of the upheaval as "stone-throwing," which they ascribed to annoyance felt by the *yaku*. In one instance it was possible to say that the aggrieved *yaku* were not those of the recent dead. While camping within a couple of hundred yards of the Bendiyagalge caves in that part of the Uva jungle known as Henebedda we were startled between eleven and twelve one night by a deep groaning sound of considerable volume which was immediately followed by an outcry from the caves. Men shouted, women and children cried out, and every dog in the settlement howled its loudest. The noise which alarmed the cave occurred only once, and can hardly have lasted for more than ten seconds, but the chatter of people and the howling of dogs must have continued for about a quarter of an hour. We are entirely unable to state the cause of the noise, but suppose that it was due to one rock slipping upon another, or to the splitting of a mass of rock below the surface of the

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 494.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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769 ground, but no freshly exposed rock surfaces or any displace-
775 ment of the soil was to be seen next morning in the neighbour-
hood of the caves or the country immediately round them. The Veddas, however, had no doubt as to the cause of the noise and described it as "stone-throwing," stating that a number of *yaku* must have been annoyed with their proceedings on the previous day, when, after going through the *kirikoraha* ceremony over a fine buck which one of them had shot the night before, they were tempted to show us some part of the *kolamaduwa* ceremony without providing the proper gifts for the *yaku* invoked on that occasion. They pointed out that it was the *yaku* of long dead Veddas who had manifested their displeasure by stone-throwing, though they all admitted that no one had seen the stones thrown or could show the stones with which the alleged bombardment had been effected. This, combined with the fact that a minority of Veddas frankly admit that the cause of leaving the site where death has occurred is fear of the *yaka*, seems to point to the whole process of desertion being due to fear of the spirit of the deceased, which for a short but indefinite time seems to be thought of as existing near the body it has left, though it was never possible to discover that this was a clearly formulated belief.

The matter may indeed be said to have been put beyond doubt by a discovery made by Mr Parker. The words *mal pannas wanna* occur in a number of invocations to the Nae Yaku. We could obtain no translation for these words in the field, though it was said that they alluded to the dead man, but by comparing a number of invocations to the Nae Yaku Mr Parker ascertained that *mal* is used as the equivalent of both "flowers" and "Veddas," so that this expression, which is undoubtedly a term of address to the dead man's spirit, is to be translated "driver away of Veddas."

795 Although the fear of the dead (as expressed by leaving the site of death) occurs among all the wilder Veddas, we met with a few old men, notably Poromala (Walaha) of Henebedda, and Handuna of Godatalawa, who were by no means confident that all men on their death became *yaku*. Although they were sure that all important and influential men, as well as those who

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during life had the power of calling and becoming possessed by the *yaku*, became *yaku* after death, they considered that it was by no means certain that any part of quite ordinary individuals survived death. At Godatalawa such doubts in the case of particular dead individuals might be settled by calling upon the deceased at a Nae Yaku ceremony when the following invocation was used:

Lord! New Driver away of Vaeddas, if it is true that there are miracles, killing one wild monitor lizard in the jungle while coming I must meet with a sambar deer. (Be pleased) to drink, Driver away of Vaeddas, this young coconut[1].

If much game was killed after this ceremony the deceased was considered to have become a *yaka* ready and willing to help his friends and relatives.

To ascertain the actual condition of the spirits of the departed for the first few days after death is a matter of some difficulty, for although certain communities have perfectly definite views on this point, others have not; hence it will be convenient to leave this matter for the present and to return to it when the attitude of the Veddas towards their dead has been further defined.

As each Vedda community consists of a small number of families who, since cousin marriage prevails, are usually related both by blood and marriage, the *yaku* of the recent dead, called collectively Nae Yaku, are supposed to stand towards the surviving members of the group in the light of friends and relatives, who if well treated will continue to show lovingkindness to their survivors, and only if neglected will show disgust and anger by withdrawing their assistance, or becoming even actively hostile. Hence it is generally considered necessary to present an offering to the newly dead within a week or two of their decease; but this is not invariably the case, for a few Veddas said that they would not hold a Nae Yaku ceremony until they specially required the help of the *yaku* or until misfortune threatened or had overtaken them.

Among most Veddas the offering must consist of cooked rice and coconut milk, the food that every Vedda esteems above all

[1] The transliteration of this invocation will be found in Chapter X, p. 277.

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other, but betel leaves and areca nut are often added and the oldest survivor of a small group of comparatively unsophisticated Veddas seen at Godatalawa stated that in the old days this offering would have consisted of yams and water, if, as was often the case, coconuts and rice—which were only to be secured with difficulty and by barter—could not be obtained. In each community there is one man called *kapurale* or *dugganawa*, who has the power and knowledge requisite to call the *yaku*, and in the ceremony of presenting the offering called *Nae Yaku Natanawa* (literally the dancing of the *Nae Yaku*), this man calls upon the *yaka* of the recently dead man to come and take the offering. It was stated that *dugganawa* was an older word than *kapurale* and was in fact a Vedda word, though it was soon obvious that only a minority of Veddas knew it. The *dugganawa*[1] who throughout this book will be spoken of as the shaman, becomes possessed by the *yaka* of the dead man who speaks through the mouth of the shaman in hoarse guttural accents, declaring that he approves the offering, that he will assist his kinsfolk in hunting, and often stating the direction in which the next hunting party should go.

Each shaman trains his successor, usually taking as his pupil his own son or his sister's son (i.e. his actual or potential son-in-law). Handuna of Sitala Wanniya learnt from his father. At Henebedda we were told that a special hut was built in which the shaman and his pupil slept, and from which women were excluded. It seems probable that this is only done among Veddas who have come under Sinhalese influence, as among them, but not among the wilder Veddas, women are considered unclean, and there was no isolation of the shaman and his pupil at Sitala Wanniya.

Sella Wanniya of Unuwatura Bubula was instructed by his father, and during his apprenticeship he resided with him in a hut into which his mother was not allowed to come.

The pupil learns to repeat the invocations used at the various ceremonies, but no food is offered to the *yaku*. At Sitala Wanniya we were told that the shaman recited the following formula, explaining to the *yaku* that he is teaching his pupil:

[1] See footnote, p. 16.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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769 invoked to give success in hunting. With Kande Yaka is also associated the *yaka* of his younger brother Bilindi, who is commonly believed to have been killed by Kande Wanniya in a fit of temper and who according to another version is not the brother but the brother-in-law of Kande Yaka. It is usual to invoke Kande Yaka and also Bilindi Yaka at the beginning of a *Nae Yaku* ceremony, and it was pointed out at different times by a number of our informants that the *Nae Yaku* could not come to the offerings unless accompanied by Kande Yaka, who was even spoken of as bringing the *Nae Yaku* with him. In fact, many Veddas stated that the *Nae Yaku* go to Kande Yaka and become his attendants; this point of view was illustrated by the fact that in two death dances seen (one held for a man who had died seven days previously, the other a rehearsal performed for our benefit), Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked, and possessed the shaman and gave signs of their favour to the group of Veddas present, before the shaman became possessed by the *Nae Yaku*. Further, many of our informants, especially the less sophisticated, pointed out that soon after death the spirit of the deceased resorted to Kande Yaka in order to obtain his permission to accept offerings from their living relatives, and to obtain power from him to assist them in return for their offerings, or to injure them in the event of their bad behaviour. Thus Kande Yaka, who is of especial assistance in hunting, becomes Lord of the Dead. We have, however, little doubt that to the majority of Veddas Kande Yaka is especially the *yaka* who gives success in hunting, and that his relation to the dead does not leap to their minds on the mention of his name as does the idea of his helpfulness in hunting, for Kande Yaka was essentially a friendly and helpful *yaka*, who, unlike many other *yaku* usually beneficent, never sent sickness; in fact, Kande Yaka the spirit scarcely differs as patron of hunters from Kande Wanniya the mighty hunter, still living and showing kindness and helpfulness towards the people among whom he dwelt.

770 It is now possible to consider the condition of the spirit of the deceased for a few days after death, according to those Veddas who state that a definite period elapses before the spirit

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becomes a *yaka*, for it appears that properly speaking the word *yaka* should not be applied to the spirit of the dead for the first few days after it has left the body. During this short period the word *prana karaya* (living one) should be used for the spirit of the deceased, for it has not yet attained the condition implied by the term *yaka*. Among the Henebedda Veddas it was thought that the *prana karaya* resorted to Kandé Yaka a few days, perhaps three or five, after death, and then obtained permission from him to accept offerings from the living, and thus become numbered among his attendants, the *Nae Yaku*; but beyond a vague idea that the spirit might perhaps exist for a short time at the site where death had occurred, these folk had no knowledge of its state before it reached Kande Yaka. The Bandaraduwa Veddas, who had come more under Sinhalese and Tamil influence, asserted that the spirit of the deceased spent some days in the neighbourhood of the death scene, which it only left to seek the Kataragam God and obtain his permission to become a *yaka* and pass into the train of attendants on Kande Yaka, and so become a *Nae Yaku* capable of accepting offerings from the living and in return helping or injuring them.

The method of invocation of the *yaku* is essentially the same in all Vedda ceremonies; an invocation is sung by the shaman and often by the onlookers, while the shaman slowly dances, usually round the offering that has been prepared for the *yaku*. Sometimes the invocations are quite appropriate and either consist of straightforward appeals to the *yaka* invoked for help, or recite the deeds and prowess of the *yaka* when he too was a man, as when Kande Yaka is addressed as "continuing to go from hill to hill [who] follows up the traces from footprint to footprint of excellent sambar deer." But at other times the charms seem singularly inappropriate; probably in many of these instances they are the remains of old Simhalese charms that have not only been displaced from their proper position and function, but have been mangled in the process, and have in the course of time become incomprehensible. As the charm is recited over and over again the shaman dances more and more quickly, his voice becomes hoarse and he soon becomes possessed by the *yaka*, and, although he does not lose consciousness and can coordinate

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
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It is not suggested that the conscious element is entirely absent from the Vedda possession dances, it is impossible to believe that such a sudden collapse as that occurring in the Henebedda *kiriŧoraka* ceremony (p. 222) (when Kande Yaka in the person of the shaman shoots the sambar deer), followed by an almost instantaneous recovery, is entirely non-volitional, and the same holds good for the pig-spearing in the Bambura Yaka ceremony (p. 243) at Sitala Wanniya. We believe that these facts can be fully accounted for by a partial abolition of the will, that is to say, by a dulling of volition far short of complete unconsciousness. The shaman in fact surrenders himself to the dance in the fullest sense, and it is this, combined with a high degree of sub-conscious expectancy, which leads him to enact almost automatically and certainly without careful forethought the traditional parts of the dance in their conventionally correct order. Further, the assistant, who follows every movement of the dancer, prepared to catch him when he falls, may also greatly assist by conscious or unconscious suggestion in the correct performance of these complicated possession dances. Again, we do not think there can be any doubt as to the non-volitional nature of the possession, by the *yaka*, of the bystanders, near relatives of the dead man, which may take place during the *Nae Yaku* ceremony[1].

One remarkable fact may be chronicled here, viz. that we have never met a Vedda who had seen the spirit of a dead man, that is to say, no Vedda ever saw a ghost, at least in his waking hours. We have never been able to obtain any corroborative evidence for Bailey's assertion that "the spirits [of the dead] appear to them in dreams and tell them [the Veddas] where to hunt." Veddas certainly dream, but Handuna and his son-in-law Kaira, two most trustworthy informants, said that they did

[1] There was nothing about the general behaviour of any of the Veddas with whom we came in contact that suggested a specially neurotic or hysterical tendency. The graver stigmata of hysteria such as would warrant a diagnosis of functional disease were always absent and the Veddas, even when ill, were in no sense fuss makers or inclined to magnify their ailments in the way so many Melanesians do. We are indebted to Dr C. S. Myers for the suggestion that possession by the *yaku* can best be explained as an affection (dissociation) of altered personality. If this be so the condition is comparable to a number of well-known cases in the sphere of mental pathology.

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not often have dreams. Dreams are considered uncanny, and Handuna said that, although a shaman, he himself feared them. He told us that a man would usually remain quietly in the rock-shelter for a whole day after a dream, and would not leave it to get food, even if staying in the cave meant going hungry. Handuna once dreamt that he had shot a monkey and brought it back to the cave, so he did not go out hunting the next day but stayed in the cave. He said that he had never had dreams that were of themselves of a terrifying nature, such as being attacked by bears or falling over a precipice. He dreamt of his father a few days after his death, but seldom or never since then. In his dream his dead father invited him to come hunting with him, and together they went into the jungle and found some yams and cooked and ate them. Handuna said that he was not afraid "because he was my father; what was there to be afraid of? Nevertheless I stayed in the cave, for I was sorry that day." Handuna told us that children—even small children that cannot talk—may wake up shrieking, but he has never heard of people talking in their sleep.

With regard to the causation of dreams there was a real but ill-defined belief connecting the dream-forms of dead relatives with the spirits (*yaku*) of the dead. Discussing this matter in connection with his dream of his dead father, Handuna said, "We think it is through love they come," but he showed that he realised that living people who were not near relatives might be seen in dreams, by volunteering the statement that at our departure he might dream of one of us (C. G. S.) to whom he was speaking.

Although the dream-forms of dead persons were vaguely associated with their *yaku*, it was generally denied that the dead seen in dreams told the living where to hunt, and it must be remembered that the general opinion was that no living person had ever seen a *yaku*, and it was only when specially discussing dreams that it was said that *yaku* were seen in dreams. Nor did the *Nae Yaku* regularly make their presence known in any other way than by possession, though some Veddas translated the minor noises of the jungle into signs of the presence of the *yaku*. These facts also seem to militate against the idea that any

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considerable part of Vedda possession is a fraud, deliberately conceived and perpetrated, for knowing, as many Veddas do, of the frequency with which the Sinhalese see "devils" and "spirits" of all sorts, nothing would appear easier, if fraud were intended, than for a shaman to assert that he could see the spirits which every Vedda believes are constantly around him.

Arrows play a considerable part in the Vedda religion, two forms of arrow being used. The first is the ordinary arrow used for shooting game, the second a ceremonial arrow called *aude* with a blade 8 to 18 inches long, which is usually but not always hafted into a handle often considerably shorter than the blade[1]. Both forms of arrows are used in the possession dances described in Chapter IX, but in addition to this the shooting arrow is used as a protection to infants, being commonly thrust in the ground by the side of a sleeping child when its mother is forced to leave it. We heard of this custom in several communities, and at Sitala Wanniya, where arrows were scarce, were shown a wooden bladed arrow which was said to be used in this way (figure 7 (*a*)); *aude* might also be made of wood when an iron blade was not available, and figure 7 (*b*) shows a wooden *aude* made for us at Henebedda. These facts are important as showing that the power of the arrow lies in itself and not in its iron blade.

The protective power of the arrow was noted by Nevill, who stated that the Nilgala Veddas "regard the symbol of an arrow, placed by their babe, as efficient protection for it. They leave tiny babes upon the sand for hours together, with no other guard than an arrow stuck in the ground by their side. Their belief in the efficacy of this has received no shock. They never knew such a child to be attacked by wild beasts, pigs, leopards, jackals, etc. or harmed[2]."

With regard to the long-bladed and short-handled ceremonial arrows, the handles of these are sometimes covered with incisions so roughly executed that they do not form a pattern and can hardly be decorative even in intention, so that probably they only serve the useful purpose of preventing the hand from

[1] These ceremonial arrows are doubtless identical with the large blades described by various authors as formerly used in shooting elephants.

[2] *Op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 184.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1911
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Besides the important part in the Vedda cult of the dead played by the propitiation of the *Nae Yaku*, and of the *yaku* of certain other Veddas such as Kande Wanniya who as *yaku* have attained to special importance (approaching that of culture heroes in other forms of belief), there is a certain feeling of reverence for a host of unnamed *yaku*. Little attention is paid to these but, since it is stated that they too were once men, the suggestion may be hazarded that they represent the *yaku* of the forgotten dead. These *yaku*, although all around in the jungle, are in some instances thought of as vaguely attached to special localities, especially to glades in the forest, unusually large trees, and above all large rocks and rocky hilltops. The *yaku* of rocks and hilltops, indeed, tend to become named, taking the name of the hill they inhabit; even among the less civilised Veddas they are sometimes identified with the *yaku* of Vedda headmen who have lived on or near the hills. On the other hand among the more sophisticated Veddas these *yaku* tend to become less and less the spirits of dead Veddas, and finally, under Tamil influence, are thought of as dangerous spirits, immigrants from beyond the Ocean, each of whom with a female of his own species haunts the hilltops and sends disease. Somewhat akin to these *yaku* in their less dangerous forms are the *kiriamma* (literally milk mothers, i.e. grandmothers), the *yaku* of Vedda women, generally the wives of Vedda headmen or chiefs, many of whom are thought of as haunting the sides and tops of hills where there are rocks and springs. They are sometimes jealous of people gathering honey—indeed there is a tendency to avoid rocky mountain tops on their account—but may be placated by a charm, though occasionally a little honey is left for them with a muttered *kapau kiriammala*—Eat O Kiriamma. Although they retain the fondness for children which they felt in their lifetime they not infrequently send sickness, at least among the more sophisticated Veddas.

A few *kiriamma* have become rather important *yaku*, notably an old woman of the Unapane clan now known as Unapane Kiriamma, but such *kiriamma* do not appear to be especially associated with rocky or hilly sites.

We are now in a position to discuss the possible evolution of

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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generally hurtful; but some have certain protective functions, and protect cattle and coconut trees and crops.

"The offerings are kept up everywhere in that part of the island to the present day at the Dewalas, and elsewhere. Luckily, it is a branch of their religion to which I devoted special attention...and although my lists are doubtless incomplete I have the names of considerably more than 100 of them.

"Some were included in the lists as important ancestors; others, the majority, because of their power, others because of their cruelty, or their sudden violent death.

"Panikki Vaedda occurs among them, and there are a few other names which may be those of Vaeddas,—such as Yapa, Hiti, Hapu etc....

"I have been informed that every one for whom a *dana* or funeral feast is not offered (at which the spirit is supposed to be present) remains in the form of a homeless spirit (*preta*) or *yaka*. These commonly disappear in time and are forgotten. Some of them remain about their old abodes, and uncanny noises heard during the night in the houses are caused by these ghosts, as in Europe....

"The Sinhalese demonology is very intricate, and it is extremely difficult to understand. There are many classes of *yaku*; but I believe that this Bandar worship is the only indigenous portion of it. I have traced practically all the other demons to Southern India, although the *kapurala* claim that a few others, in addition to the Bandaras, are of local origin. They themselves admit that all the rest were imported from India.

"The twelve Vaedi Yaku are, I believe, an entirely different set of evil spirits....

"The Vaeddas told me that they are extremely malignant. Besides these, they said that the whole forest is full of local nameless Yaku, who make strange noises in the night and frighten people in various ways. This also is a firmly rooted Sinhalese belief; their estimate of the number is two millions."

The resemblance between this *Bandara* cult and the Vedda worship of the Nae Yaku is obvious and is still further shown by

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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the canonization as a Bandar of one Godegedara, an influential Ratemahatmaya, first of Wellasse and then of Badulla who died in 1872 and whose spirit now prevents disease among cattle, increases their milk, protects man and animals from beasts of prey, helps hunters and prevents their meeting wild beasts suddenly in the jungle and in fact gives success in all things[1]. About three months after his death certain unusual happenings suggested that one of the dead was trying to attract the attention of the living. An elephant appeared at Damenegama in Uva and in the neighbourhood, and although repeatedly shot at continued to come to the villages and tear the roofs off the houses, but did no other damage. This unusual behaviour led to the suspicion that one of the dead had sent the elephant, and accordingly the turning stone (*paena balanawa*) was consulted as to whether one of the old or recent dead was responsible. When it was ascertained that it was the latter, a ceremony *kamba kanuwa natanawa* was undertaken to discover whose was the spirit. The *kapurala* became possessed, when the spirit within him announced that he, Godegedara, had sent the elephant and that he desired to be honoured and invoked to help men. It was explained that the spirits of the dead always approach the living for the first time through animals, or signify their desire for offerings by making a man sick. The rank of the deceased is roughly estimated by the animal sent, in which, however, the spirit of the deceased is not immanent. The lion is said to be highest, then comes the elephant; the leopard indicates the spirit of a rather less exalted person.

It appears that the dead have no power to interfere in human affairs and take offerings until permission has been obtained from one or more high gods, of whom the chief is the Kataragam God. How the spirit obtains this permission was not clear, but the early signs of the power of the deceased were always in some way connected with the Kataragam God. Thus Godegedera caused the elephant of the Kataragam God to go mad at the *perahera* ceremony, and when Kosgama became a Bandar a leopard sent by him rode round the Kataragam temple on the

[1] A translation of the invocation used when calling upon Godegedera is given in the addendum to this chapter.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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back of one of the God's bulls, i.e., one of the *tavalam* bulls, bringing provisions and salt to the temple.

Kosgama Bandar is associated with Kosgama, where he lived in the 18th century or earlier. He refused to pay tribute to the king and from his invocation given elsewhere[1] it may be gathered that he rebelled and was betrayed by an adherent whom he trusted. He was captured, tied to a tree and shot to death with arrows. Kosgama Bandar was said to be especially helpful in litigation and in recovering lost cattle, but in fact he is of assistance in all ways.

We may now return to Panikki Yaka, who Mr Parker agrees with us may safely be identified as the spirit of the 16th century "Vedda" chief, Panikki the Vedda. In the same manner as this *yaka* has been remembered and has developed the characters of a Vedda hero, so we believe Kande Yaka and other hero Yaku of the wilder Veddas have arisen, for it is as a mighty Vedda of the old days that the Veddas revere Kande Yaka.

We need only assume that such heroes were unusually successful hunters, stronger personalities than their neighbours, so that their names were held in honour among a people more numerous than their immediate family circle, to see clearly how after their death their names would be continued in memory and their spirits be invoked by those who had admired and feared them, and by their children and children's children. It is entirely in harmony with this view that Kande Yaka should have become the Lord of the Dead, to whom the lesser spirits resort to obtain permission to accept offerings and to aid their still living relatives and former companions.

No reverence is paid to the heavenly bodies, and our old Kandyan informant knew nothing of any worship of the sun or moon. He nevertheless agreed that in his youth as at the present day the Veddas would call the moon Hande Deyo or Sande Deyo and the sun Ira Deyo respectively[2].

[1] "Note on the Bandar Cult of the Kandyan Sinhalese," *Man*, 1909, p. 77.

[2] We found Deyo to be commonly used for "god," the proper word for which is *deviyā*, pl. *deviyō*; but as explained to us by Mr Parker these words are often altered to *deyiya* and *deyiyo* and the Sinhalese "always say 'Kataragama Deyiya' or 'Deyiyo.' The plural forms are used honorifically with a singular meaning."

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Even Nevill missed the essentials of the Vedda cult of the dead, though he shows that he knew something of what actually occurred. "The Vaedda religion seems to have been such that the spirit alone was recognised as human, and the flesh, when the spirit has left it, receives neither veneration nor superstitious reverence. Where the life left the body, there the body was left....Two or five days after the death, however, the relations were invited to the scene of funeral and a feast was held...to satisfy relations there had been no foul play....

"The Vaeddas of Bintenne, however, having assembled relations and neighbours, procure rice, or other grain, and decorate the pot in which it is cooked with sprays of the liniya tree[1], a shrub with leaves like our hazel, but with bright scarlet flowers. If no flowers can be got, bits of red cotton or other cloth should be used. The celebrant then dances round the pot of food, with an arrow in his hand, singing any chant he knows, and making obeisance to the food by a wave of the arrow. The food is then distributed....

"It is evident this custom cannot apply to those who formerly did not eat grain. These, however, were few. Roasted game would probably with such take the place of grain, and the latter seems only used as the best and most unusual food procurable, much as our poor try to provide cake, and not bread and cheese, etc. at weddings....

"Bodies were never buried until the English Government endeavoured to enforce burial. The Vaeddas have not the least objection to the corpse being buried, but object greatly to being forced to dig the grave...[2]."

Although the Sarasins underestimated the importance of the Vedda cult of the dead, and failed to discover that even "Nature" Veddas make offerings to the spirits of their departed, their opinions and conclusions are necessarily given at some length on account of the undoubted importance of their work. "The Veddas of Dewilane told us that after death they became spirits or yakas, but as to whether these persisted (*lebten*) or not they never thought; they did not pray to them nor honour them. The 'Nature' Veddas from Danigala...told us in 1885

[1] *Holigerna isora*, L. [2] *Tajrobanian*, Vol. I, p. 179.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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775

that they worshipped neither their ancestors, nor a devil nor a god. Five years later the Veddas settled at Henebedda in the Nilgala district told us that they believed that the dead became spirits or yakas; but they did not make offerings to them. At Wewatte they likewise believe that the dead become yakas and there they invoke them in cases of sickness...gods they have none. A Vedda from the neighbourhood of Kalodai (Pallegama district) named Manikrala informed us that they worshipped children, father, mother, grandfather, grandmother—in short their dead relatives. In remembrance of the death of such relatives they gave a present to the first Buddhist priest whom they met. We therefore asked this 'Culture' Vedda whether his relatives continued to live as spirits after death, but he replied that he did not know; the present of rice was simply in remembrance of the deceased man. In answer to the further question whether they had a definite religion or worshipped a god, he replied that he had never thought about it, and he gave us the impression that this question and the idea it suggested were new to him.

"We found the idea of the existence of the departed as spirits further developed in an old 'Culture' Vedda of Mudagala near Mahaoya, named Sella. He said they had no gods besides their departed. Every year at the full moon they consumed yams and other food at the burying place. On this occasion they hold a dance in honour of the departed, invoke the dead by name and pray them to help them. At Omuni the corpses were buried in Sinhalese fashion and provided with burial presents; but two Veddas when we questioned them about their religion could tell us nothing on this point, and said that the departed were not honoured as gods[1]."

From these data the Sarasins conclude that "genuine 'Nature' Veddas either lack, or at the most have a quite uncertain idea of the persistence of the souls of the dead at the site of death, and that they make no offerings to their manes[2]." Further, they state "that among 'Culture' Veddas this idea has developed but little, for they either answered that they did not know whether they persisted as souls after death, or that they

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 497 and 498. [2] *Loc. cit.*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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had never thought the matter over. Nevertheless they honour the names which like the Sinhalese they call Yakas with food, dances or offerings. Any monotheistic idea of God is absent both in 'Nature' and in 'Culture' Veddas[1]."

The three strata of belief to which we referred at the beginning of this chapter and which exist among the Veddas of the present day, have not fused so thoroughly that there is any great difficulty in isolating them. We believe they may be tabulated as follows:

I. The Cult of the dead, including the cult of the spirits of recent ancestors, i.e. of the Nae Yaku and the *yaku* of certain Veddas who have been long dead and may well be regarded as heroes. The most important of these is Kande Yaka.

II. The Cult of foreign spirits, who have become naturalised and have taken the friendly protective nature of the Vedda *yaku*.

III. The Cult of foreign spirits who, though not often regarded as such, have retained their foreign nature and are in the main terrible or even hostile.

Another feature of the last stratum of thought is the endowment of true Vedda *yaku* with foreign attributes[2]. When the history of the island is considered, it is not surprising that the first condition, which may be considered the primitive religion of the Veddas, should nowhere be found standing alone at the present day. It is impossible to say how much the Indian invaders influenced the aboriginal inhabitants of Lanka (Ceylon) when they took possession of the island under Vijeyo about 500 B.C., for the few references made to Veddas in the ancient chronicles of the country throw no light on this subject.

Knox mentions that Veddas paid a tribute of game and honey to the Sinhalese, and in his day there were "wild and tame" Veddas, and it is certain that from the middle ages onwards there was a considerable amount of intercourse between at least the tamer Veddas and the Sinhalese. Therefore it is natural that foreign beliefs should have gradually infiltrated the native Vedda cult.

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] The invocation (No. XLI) to Ambārapoti Kiriamma given on p. 316 is an excellent example of this. Billindi Yaka is here treated as if he were a Sinhalese or Tamil deity.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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presented to Kande Yaka the hunters would expect bad luck in future, and might even be bitten by snakes or attacked by bears.

The *Nae Yaku* are the spirits of the dead, they must report themselves to Kande Yaka as the chief of all the *yaku* and from him obtain permission to help the living and accept their offerings. Kande Yaka comes to the *Nae Yaku* ceremonies since the spirits of the dead could not be present without him. It was definitely stated that the spirits of the dead did not become *yaku* until the fifth day after death, but my informant knew nothing of the state of the spirits during this period though it was surmised that at least part of the time would be passed in seeking Kande Yaka or in his company, though there was no idea as to where Kande Yaka had his being. It was however stated, that the spirits of the dead were in hills, caves and rocks. The *Nae Yaku* including the spirit of the dead man are invoked on the fifth day after death. An offering is made of coconut milk and rice, if these are obtainable, but if not one consisting of yams and water is substituted. The shaman dances, holding in his hand a big ceremonial arrow for which no special name could be elicited, while the remainder of the community gather round. The shaman invokes the *Nae Yaku* and also Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka. The shaman becomes possessed and is supported lest he fall while the spirit of the deceased promises that yams, honey, and game shall be plentiful. He then sprinkles coconut milk or water from the offering on the relatives of the deceased as a sign of the spirit's favour. One or more of the relatives of the dead man may also become possessed. The shaman gives the relatives water and yams, putting their food into their mouths himself while he is possessed, and it appeared that this might cause the relatives to become possessed. At the end of the ceremony he asks the *Nae Yaku* to depart to where they came from and the spirits leave the offering.

Nothing was known concerning the Kataragam God or the *kolamadua* ceremony, though our informants said that they had heard of other Veddas performing this ceremony. Gale Yaka was not known, nor yet Wanagata Yaka.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

776 At Sitala Wanniya the principal *yaku* are Kande Yaka,
773 Bilindi Yaka, Bambura Yaka and the *Nae Yaku*. According to these people Kande Wanniya killed his younger brother Bilindi when the latter was only an infant. The story is that their parents were out hunting when Bilindi, feeling hungry, began to cry and would not desist in spite of the endearments lavished upon him by Kande. At last Kande threw the child on the ground in despair and so killed him.

776 It appeared that as a hunting hero Bambura Yaka is on the whole as important as Kande Yaka, though he is certainly not looked upon as so benevolent nor so loved as the latter, who helps men to kill deer and never sends sickness. Bambura Yaka is a somewhat grim spirit who although he gives yams and helps men to kill pig, also sends sickness and must be invoked to remove it, and he is also invoked when dogs are lost or taken by leopards. Because of his giving yams he is sometimes known as Ale (yam) Yaka, and yams are offered to him together with other vegetable food when this can be obtained.

224 The *kirikoraha* ceremony is performed to obtain game, in
776 gratitude for which the head and a portion of the flesh from
762 the breast of every deer killed is cooked as an offering to Kande Yaka and is afterwards eaten by the community. If this were not done Kande Yaka would be angry and little game would be killed.

The *kirikoraha* seen at Sitala Wanniya is described on pp. 223 to 226, and the ceremony at which Bambura Yaka is invoked on pp. 237 to 245.

775 The spirits of the dead become the *Nae Yaku* and with
782 Kande Yaka are invoked for success in hunting; a description
769 of this ceremony will be found on pp. 230 to 233. A few days after a death the dead man is invoked for assistance in hunting, being addressed as *mal paenae wanna*, and when the relatives of the group leave the cave to look for game they repeat the invocation as they move along. After this, if they are successful, they know that the spirit of the dead man has become powerful as a *Nae Yaku* and invoke him at the *kirikoraha* among the *Nae Yaku* called upon. The *Nae Yaku* must obtain permission

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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to accept offerings from Kande Yaka, and Kande Yaka must be invoked before the *Nae Yaku* to come to the offering, which should consist of coconuts, rice, areca nuts, betel leaves and, when obtainable, bananas.

We consider that the beliefs so far described represent the first stratum or basis of the Vedda religion and to be of its original substance. This is not the case with the remaining portion of the religion of the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya, which relates to certain foreign spirits who have become naturalised Vedda *yaku*. The Rahu Yaku are spirits of this sort. A fire ceremony occurs in the dance by which they are invoked and there is no doubt that these *yaku* are derived from the Sinhalese demon Gini Rahu Bandar. Yet in spite of this they have acquired a Vedda history, being regarded as long dead Veddas quite unconnected with the Rahu Bandar of the Sinhalese. The story concerning them is that long ago three Vedda brothers occupied a shelter together and one day one of them returned from hunting to find a stranger in the cave with his wife. The unknown rushed away and made good his escape, but the injured husband made up a big fire and in his rage and despair jumped into it. His *yaka* is one of the Rahu Yaku, the other two being the *yaku* of his two brothers who did not, however, burn themselves to death.

The help of the three Rahu Yaku is asked to cure sickness, to obtain success in hunting, and in collecting rock honey. Hunting and honey collecting both have their true Vedda patrons Kande Yaka and Dola Yaka, therefore the Rahu Yaku seem superfluous in these capacities. Further evidence as to their foreign origin is afforded by the fact that they carry "swords" (*kaduwa*), a weapon unknown to Veddas except in incantations[1], and that all three are considered somewhat dangerous, and cause sickness.

Indigollae Yaka, a foreign spirit (whose origin will be considered at length in Chapter VII), is looked upon as an attendant upon Kande Yaka in this community.

The names of certain spirits residing on various hills and

[1] Even these swords, one of which is shown in figure 11 (p. 256), had been naturalised and were said to represent *ande*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

God is almost, if not quite, thought of as their brother-in-law. In fact the divinity of the God and of his consort has not among the Veddas reached the proportions it has among the Sinhalese and Tamils. It has already been stated that among the Sinhalese the spirits of the dead who desire to become *Bandāra* present themselves to the Kataragam God, and from him obtain permission to receive offerings of cooked food (*adukku*) in return for benefits to be conferred, or to smite men with sickness and other disasters, and we were told that the Kataragam God would not refuse any spirit who approached him with this request[1].

Further, these Veddas hold that the man may become possessed by the Kataragam God in the same way as by the *Nae Yaku*, and the god is worshipped at certain shrines in the Kovil Vanamai district which are traditionally associated with Veddas and are said to be of Vedda origin. One of these at a place called Kokkadichchola is said to have arisen as follows.

A Vedda and his wife were cutting the trunk of a tree for honey when the tree began to bleed and they found in it not a bee's nest but an infant. The Vedda became possessed and while this condition lasted the God within him announced that he was the Kataragam God and that a temple must be built to him there. When the Vedda returned to his senses the child could not be found, but in its place was an image of the God.

Returning to the beliefs held by the Bandaraduwa people concerning the *Nae Yaku*, these can be best illustrated and explained by considering the events following the death of a Kovil Vanamai man called Tuta.

The day after our arrival at Bandaraduwa a Vedda called Kaira came to our camp sobbing and shaking and protesting that he could not stay long with us as his brother was dead. He seemed deeply affected, though another brother, Kaurale, who was with him appeared quite calm, which led us to suspect that his uncontrollable agitation was due to something more than mere affection for the dead man, and we soon discovered

[1] This belief in spirits of the dead obtaining license from the Kataragam God is also held by some rural Sinhalese.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

that this brother had lived with him and died in his hut, and that it was his duty to make an offering to the nearest Buddhist priest and to provide the necessities for a dance to the *Nae Yaku*, and that he had not the wherewithal to do these things. If these duties were neglected the spirit of the dead man would be angry, and after seven days when the spirit had become a *yaku* would cause misfortune and sickness and perhaps kill him. His manifest relief when we offered him the money needed to purchase the offerings showed that his sorrow for the loss of his brother was the least of his troubles, and he was quite gay when he started on his twenty mile walk to the nearest boutique with Rs. 3·50 in his betel pouch, and readily assented to our condition that he must return with his purchases so that the *Nae Yaku* ceremony might be performed near our camp. The local shaman, who was Vidane of the Vedda settlement, was perfectly ready to agree to this, indeed it suited him well, for it saved him the trouble of walking some eight miles to the scene of the death, and as he pointed out, the *Nae Yaku* could be invoked as well in one place as in another. It was important that the *Nae Yaku* dance should be held on the seventh day after death, since it was thought that the spirit of the dead man, which became a *yaku* on the third day after death, resorted to the Kataragam God and on the seventh day obtained authority from him to accept offerings and to help or molest the living according to the way in which he was treated by them. We were assured that whatever the intentions of the relations might be with regard to the spirit of the dead man, no danger was to be apprehended until the seventh day when the *Nae Yaku* ceremony should be performed, though this could not be done unless alms had previously been given to a Buddhist priest. The offerings which must be given to the priest are worth nearly three rupees and consist of the following foods and other objects. The numbers in parentheses after each object show the price in cents at the nearest boutique, some fifteen or twenty miles from Bandaraduwa. Rice 3 measures (60), 2 coconuts (20), 50 balls of jaggery sugar (15), 25 areca nuts (6), 5 tobacco leaves (12), 100 betel leaves (18), 1 plate (30), 1 cup (25), 1 mat (25), 1 handkerchief (36), half a bottle of coconut oil (50), the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

total amounting to 2 Rs. 97 cents. The offering made to the *Nae Yaku* cost only 40 cents and consisted of a coconut, 50 betel leaves and a measure of rice.

The actual ceremony at which the spirit of the dead man was invoked and offerings made to it is described in Chapter IX, pp. 233 to 237.

Certain of the invocations used by the Kovil Vanamai Veddas, for instance, in invocation (No. XXXIV) to Indigollae Kiriamma for success in hunting and the invocations sung at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony, especially that to Unapane Kiriamma (No. XXXVIII), show how greatly foreign influence has altered the character of spiritual beings who existed in the original Vedda religion.

The Veddas of Uniche form a community in much the same stage of belief as the Veddas of Bandaraduwa. A few days after death the spirit of the deceased obtains permission from a "chief" to accept offerings and assist or harm the living. Our informants could not tell us who this chief was, but appeared to think that he had lived in comparatively recent times, and were confident that he was not Kande or Bilindi Yaka.

The *Nae Yaku*, including the spirit of the dead man, are invoked a few, perhaps five, days after a death has taken place. A pot of coconut milk with betel leaves in it is placed upon a rice pounder, and the shaman, holding a ceremonial arrow in each hand, dances round this, invoking the spirits, including that of the dead man. When possessed, the shaman sprinkles some of the coconut milk on the relatives and places betel leaves on their chests; the shaman also feeds the relatives from the bowl of coconut milk. The object of this dance is said to be to enable the *prana karaya* to become a *Nae Yaka*. It is clear that this is simply a condensed account of the ceremony we witnessed at Bandaraduwa, described on pp. 233 to 237.

The conditions prevailing at Henebedda, which at first were most puzzling, were found to be largely due to the influence of Tissahami "the Vedda Arachi," whose strong personality has been already referred to on p. 41. This man had taught the present Henebedda shaman much of his lore, and the latter

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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was but too anxious to assimilate and practise all that the Arachi would teach him. The knowledge he thus acquired spread to the younger members of the tribe, such as Sita Wanniya, who obviously took more interest in the ceremonial observances of his religion than any other of the younger men we met, and it was said that he would probably be the next shaman. The older men, on the other hand, appeared to know little of the developments introduced by the Arachi. To them Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and the *Nae Yaku* were not only the most important spiritual powers, but appeared to be the only ones who were at all well known; the simplicity of the eschatological beliefs of these older men has already been referred to on p. 126 and agrees wonderfully well with those described by Bailey in 1863. "The result of the most patient inquiry is, that the Veddahs have a vague belief in a host of undefined spirits, whose influence is rather for good than evil. ...They believe that the air is peopled by spirits, that every rock and every tree, every forest and every hill, in short every feature of nature, has its *genius loci*; but these seem little else than mere nameless phantoms, whom they regard rather with mysterious awe than actual dread....But besides this vague spirit-worship, they have a more definite superstition, in which there is more of system. This is the belief in the guardianship of the spirits of the dead. Every relative becomes a spirit after death, who watches over the welfare of those who are left behind. These, which include their ancestors and their children, they term their 'nehya yakoon,' kindred spirits. They describe them as 'ever watchful, coming to them in sickness, visiting them in dreams, giving them flesh when hunting.' In short in every calamity, in every want they call on them for aid; and it is curious that the shades of their departed children, 'bilindoo yakkoon,' or infant spirits, as they call them, are those which they appear most frequently to invoke....

"The ceremonies with which they invoke them are few as they are simple. The most common is the following: an arrow is fixed upright in the ground, and the Veddah dances slowly round it, chanting this invocation, which is almost musical in its rhythm:

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

'Mâ miya, mâ miya, mâ deyâ,
Topang koyihetti mittigan yandâh!'

'My departed one, my departed one, my God!
Where art thou wandering?'

The spirit of the dead is here simply called upon, without even the object for which it is invoked being mentioned. And this invocation appears to be used on all occasions, when the intervention of the guardian spirit is required, in sickness, preparatory to hunting, etc.

"Sometimes, in the latter case, a portion of the flesh of the game is promised as a votive offering, in the event of the chase being successful; and they believe that the spirits will appear to them in dreams and tell them where to hunt.

"Sometimes they cook food and place it in the dry bed of a river, or some other secluded spot, and then call on their deceased ancestors by name. 'Come, and partake of this! Give us maintenance as you did when living! Come! wheresoever you may be; on a tree, on a rock, in the forest, come!' and they dance round the food, half chanting, half shouting, the invocation.

"They have no knowledge of a Supreme Being. 'Is he on a rock? On a white ant-hill? On a tree? I never saw a God!' was the only reply I received to repeated questions. They have no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to protect their votive offerings[1]."

Although in essentials this account is accurate, certain corrections and suggestions must be made. The "bilindoo yakkoon" are not "infant spirits" but obviously represent Bilindi Yaka who became a *yaka* while still a child. The arrow dance is clearly described and agrees with the dance we saw and photographed near Bendiyagalge, figures of which are given in Plate XXVI.

With regard to the spirits of the dead appearing in dreams and stating where game will be found, this, which is quite contradictory to our experience, has already been referred to on

[1] J. Bailey, *op. cit.* pp. 302—303.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX6

p. 135, but it may be noted that Bailey clearly did not know of the existence of shamanistic ceremonies and we have little doubt that the information given him, which he took to refer to dreams, in fact described the experiences of possession. The "few sticks...with a branch thrown over them" are clearly remains of the *mases* upon which the offerings are placed.

The *Maha Yakino* are the spirits of old Vedda women, the chief of whom is the Maha Kiriamma, who, as Bailey pointed out in 1863, is more feared than loved, and in many cases is supposed to send sickness. It was said that her name was Anami and that she lived at Okegala near Alutnuwara, dying of old age; but in spite of these circumstantial details, which are perhaps due to the teachings of Tissahami, neither the name nor the memory of her husband has survived.

Unapane Kiriamma is another important *Maha Yakini* who lived near Unapane[1].

Unapane Kiriamma also gives luck in honey getting, and it is thought that she in some way causes bees to build good combs, in fact, all the *Maha Yakino* are associated with rock honey from the belief that they especially affect the rocky crests of hills[2].

Although the *Maha Yakino* are looked upon as the spirits of old Vedda women and are reputed to show their fondness for children by kidnapping them, they are regarded with considerable awe, for they are considered to send disease, and it is necessary to make an offering to them in order that this may be removed. This is generally done at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony described on p. 268. With the exception of the

[1] She is known to the jungle Sinhalese of the Vedirata, who state that with her husband Unapane Kaira Wanniya she made the Unapane paddy fields. She is particularly invoked by barren women, and those who have brought forth still-born children, for increase of cattle and milk, to prevent cattle being taken by leopards or damaging the crops and to give good harvests.

[2] Offerings of honey made to the *Maha Yakino* are described elsewhere. The belief that the *Maha Yakino* are especially associated with hills is also found among the Sinhalese of the Vedda country, who especially associate these spirits with hills on which springs are found or on which streams arise. One such hill near Nilgala, which at the end of the rains has many small streams running down its face, is known as Yakini Ela and is especially associated by the neighbouring Sinhalese with the *Maha Yakino*, who they say can be heard moving about the crest at night.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1912
AX5 Vedda AX5

invocation of the *Maha Yakino* at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony the beliefs of the Henebedda people, old and young, as far as we have described them, belong to the true Vedda stratum, but we must now record a number of *yaku* including Panikkia Yaka, who are equally believed in by the peasant Sinhalese of the Vedda country and who, like Panikkia Yaka, are probably all *yaku* of important Veddas who were village Veddas or lived in more or less organized contact with the Sinhalese. These *yaku* are:

Mawaragala Panikkia, invoked to give good fortune and avert sickness from man and beast.

Rerangala Yaka who lived in the Uva Bintenne and was particularly expert at noosing elephants, though it is not known whether he first practised this art. He died of old age, and is invoked to prevent sickness, particularly epidemic diseases, and to give prosperity in all things.

Lepat Yaka lived at Lepatgala in the Bintenne and was called Lepatgala Wanniya; nothing is known of his life or death. This *yaka* is invoked during epidemics and before hunting to prevent danger from wild animals.

Hantane Mahavedi Unehe who lived on Mawaragala, and of whose life and death nothing is known, is invoked to cure sickness and to give good fortune in hunting.

Walimbagala Yaka, whom the Veddas of Uva call Walimbagala Panikkia, formerly lived on Walimbagala between Bandaraduwa and Madana in the Eastern Province. He was a great and important chief and his spirit is invoked to cure sickness, to send game and to safeguard men taking honey.

Galaridi Bandar lived on Veragodagala near Nilgala. He was an expert at capturing elephants, which he used to present to the Kandyan kings. Galaridi Bandar is reputed to have constructed dagobas and to have brought a range of paddy fields under cultivation.

Kadaelle Nalla Panikkia was so good a huntsman that he could run down deer. It is not known where he lived, he is invoked at the *kolamaduwa* only.

Rangrual Bandar is invoked to prevent men falling when collecting honey, and also at the *kolamaduwa*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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Irugal Bandar is invoked to prevent epidemics and at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony[1].

Sandugal Bandar is invoked before hunting and safeguards men from the attacks of wild animals and snake-bite.

Ranhoti Bandar, a Vedda chief who lived at Hamanawa in Nilgala Chorale. His spirit is a very important *yaka* and not to be invoked carelessly along with others at the *kolamaduwa*, but when properly approached will help his suppliants in many ways.

Gange Bandar was in charge of rivers and also of insect pests. It is said that he belonged to the Morane *warige*, though his place is not known. He is invoked at the *kolamaduwa*, and when there is not enough rain or too much.

With these *yaku*, all of whom were said to be the spirits of dead Veddas, there were invoked two spirits of whom it was definitely said that they were not Veddas. The first of these was Peradeneya Bandar who lived at Peradeneya near Kandy, where he was *dissawa*. He prevents harm from wild beasts, and his protection is invoked during storms and at the *kolamaduwa*. Clearly this *yaka* is the spirit of a man of great local influence, probably comparable to that exerted by Godegedara whose canonisation is recorded on p. 143. The other *yaka* Kalu Bandar is more important and is widely feared throughout the Vedda-Sinhalese zone from Alutnuwara to the Eastern Province. According to the Vedda Arachi he was a native of Mallawa in India[2]. King Vijaya was frightened by a leopard and this man cured him of the sickness produced by fear; he is invoked to procure game and at the *kolamaduwa*.

We must point out that although we give these *yaku* as if a belief in them constituted an organic part of the Henebedda creed, and although the *kolamaduwa* ceremony is certainly performed by the Henebedda community, we consider that the belief in many of them is purely formal; we are convinced that a number of these *yaku* are never called upon or even considered except when invoked as part of the routine of the *kolamaduwa* ceremony. Further, we think it probable that a

[1] Mr Parker informs us that "Irugal Bandāra was a Sinhalese chief who is said to have lived at Bandāra Koswatta (where Knox dwelt) in the reign of King Wijaja Bahu."

[2] Mr Parker suggests that this may be Malwa in the Central Provinces of India or more probably Malawara, Malayalam.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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number of these *yaku*, especially Irugal Bandar and the other Bandar, may have been introduced since Bailey's time. It is even possible that Tissahami may be responsible in part.

The reference to King Vijaya shows that Kalu Bandar has nothing to do with the primitive beliefs of the Veddas, for no Vedda knew anything of Vijaya or Kuweni.

Before describing the beliefs of the village Veddas, among whom the third stratum of thought is dominant, the condition of the Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula (who have moved there from Mudugala) must be considered and compared with those of both the wilder and the village Veddas. Many of the *yaku* of the less sophisticated communities were known to them, and some invoked by the village Veddas were also called upon at Unuwatura Bubula. Although Kande Yaka was known and considered powerful to send game and cure sickness, apparently he was no longer Lord of the Dead, as he was not invoked at the *alutyakagama* (see p. 260) to which the *Nae Yaku* were called. A structure called a *bulatyahana* was built for him and a Hindu trident as well as an *aude* was held when he was invoked. Bilindi Yaka was known, but we have no note as to whether he was considered the brother of Kande Yaka or no. Bambura Yaka and his attendants known to the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya and Uniche were unknown here. Pata Yaka (Sitala Wanniya) had been heard of but had never been invoked. The Wanegatha Yaku were of considerable importance here, they were said to be the *yaku* of long dead Veddas who had perished in their rock-shelter owing to a fall of rock. Indigollae Yaka (the attendant of Kande Yaka at Sitala Wanniya) was known here and considered extremely powerful; when really short of food, offerings are made to him and his wife Indigollae Yakini, and the shaman thrusts an *aude* into the roof of his hut and hangs on it a string of beads which are kept specially for this purpose, and then Indigollae Yaka sends game. We were told that no charm or invocation accompanied this action.

We did not realise at the time of our visit that Indigollae Yaka might be another name for Gale Yaka, but this appears not unlikely in view of information furnished by Mr Parker, and the fact that Gale Yaka was here invoked with the *Nae*

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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Yaku, while at nearly all the village Vedda communities Indigollae Yaka was said to bring the *Nae Yaku*. Certainly Gale Yaka, Indigollae Yaka and Kande Yaka were all known by name, but there seemed much confusion between them all: perhaps Gale Yaka had become Lord of the Dead as he was invoked before the *Nae Yaku* in the same ceremony; Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked at a separate ceremony. No hint was given us that Gale Yaka and Indigollae Yaka were names for the same spirit, but of course this may have been so. The information that Indigollae Yaka was extremely powerful both to bring evil upon man and to help them to get game was, however, volunteered and, as already mentioned, some old, specially valuable beads were kept to be offered to him.

Gale Yaka was also invoked to give success when gathering honey; he appeared to be associated with a certain rock near Mahaella, and we were told that beads were worn during the ceremony.

The Maha Kiriamma was said to be one of the most powerful of the *Maha Yakino*, a class of female spirits who were said to send sickness[1]. Unapane Yakini (Unapane Kiriamma) was another *yakini* of the same class who was thought to live at Omunigala. Here as among many other groups of Veddas the *Maha Yakino* were associated with hill tops, and it was the custom for people collecting the honey of the rock bee to leave a piece of the comb *in situ*, saying, "Eat, O Kiriamma[2]."

When the *Maha Yakino* are invoked to cure sickness a basket is used in which are put a bead necklace and bangles and the leaves of a *na* tree. The shaman becomes possessed and raises the basket above the patient's head and prophesies recovery. The leaves are subsequently thrown away, but the beads and bangles are preserved for the *Yakino*. Presumably this is the origin of the similar or identical use of these objects in the *kolamaduwa* ceremony which, however, appears to be of Sinhalese origin.

[1] Nothing was ever said to cause us to suspect that she was connected with Gale Yaka or Indigollae Yaka.

[2] Kiriamma is in the plural in the Sinhalese, showing that all the *Maha Yakino* in the neighbourhood were invoked to partake.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Gange Bandar, unknown among the wilder Veddas but worshipped by all village Veddas, was known at Unuwatura Bubula.

OMUNI.

The history of this settlement dating back to the first half of the last century has been given on pp. 45 and 46. The Omuni folk believe there are spirits (*yaku*) everywhere in the jungle, but none have seen them; further, there are many *yaku* of each kind or species such as the Indigollae Yaku, the Dadayan Yaku and many others including the Gale Yaku called the Jungle Yaku, who do not, however, frequent the jungle around Omuni. It was said that Ganga Bandar Deyo who lives in rocks in the river is greater than any of these. Omuni was one of the first Vedda settlements we visited, and as the importance of Sinhalese and Tamil gods and demons was not then appreciated no questions concerning these were asked. It is, however, reasonable to suppose that the Kataragam God and other mighty *deviyo* are worshipped. The spirits of the dead (*Nae Yaku*) are believed to be associated with rocks; on the whole they are kindly spirits, but it is necessary to invoke and propitiate them.

A *Nae Yaku* ceremony is held some little time after a death has taken place, at which the shaman dances with an *aude* before a *maesa* on which is placed an offering of cooked yams and other food, and the *maesa* is decorated with special clothes kept for that purpose. The *aude* is held in the smoke arising from gum-resin thrown on glowing charcoal, and then pressed on the head of all the male members of the community. If this were not done little game would be killed.

We have an account of another ceremony performed to cure sickness and when the chena had been reaped, but it is not clear what spirits were invoked at this; presumably the most important of these were certain of the *yaku* other than the *Nae Yaku*, though the *Nae Yaku* may have played a subordinate part. A shed or very rough house is built and hung with special clothes reserved for this purpose, those shown to us being rather old and worn pieces of linen woven at Batticaloa. A roughly made shelf forming a sort of altar is built in the shed on which

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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the offering is placed. The dance is held at night and continues until morning when the whole community eat the offering, though only the men dance. We were shown a pot in a small cave near the settlement which was said to be kept there purposely, and which it was stated was used for boiling rice for the ceremony.

We may now consider the religious beliefs of certain communities in which the third stratum of belief already alluded to is dominant. Such communities are the village Veddas of Uva Bintenne and those of the Eastern Province and Tamankaduwa, among all of whom the *Nae Yaku* were known and reverenced, but the great Vedda heroes have all disappeared, their place having been taken by numerous Sinhalese gods and demons. Some of the village Veddas even build temples, rough bark or mud huts like their own habitations in which the various symbols of the *devèjo* and *yaku* are kept and in which the shaman dances.

Such a temple was seen at Yakure dedicated to Gange Bandar Deyo, here also were two rough stones leaning against a tree on the *bund* of Yakurewaewa which were held sacred to Gane Deyo (Ganesa).

At a place called Nadena, where there were said to be Veddas until a few years ago, on the road running inland from Patrippu in the Eastern Province, there is a temple containing an image of Ganesa and this is looked upon as a Vedda shrine. Other temples or shrines in the Eastern Province are traditionally associated with Veddas though none survive at the present day, except, we believe, at Portiv near Patrippu and at Mandur.

Village Veddas of the Bintenne.

At Dambani and the neighbouring settlements of Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle the *Nae Yaku* are held to be of great importance. Reference has already been made on p. 50 to the difficulty of working with these village Veddas, and our information concerning the religious beliefs of the Dambani folk was obtained from the Arachi of Belligala; with regard to Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle the little information we possess was obtained at first hand and carefully checked, and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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though incomplete we have no doubt of its substantial accuracy as far as it goes. We had considerable doubts as to the reliability of our Dambani information, but these have been removed lately as far as they affect Kande Yaka and the *Nae Yaku* owing to the kindness of Mr Hartshorne who allowed us to look through a number of notes collected among these people thirty years ago. And since the information obtained from the Arachi of Belligala was correct on these points, there seems to be no reason to disbelieve the rest of his information.

According to the Arachi, who, it must be remembered, as stated on p. 49, knows the Dambani folk well, there are three important classes of *yaku*.

The first of these are the *Nae Yaku* who do not go to Kande Yaka but to Indigollae Yaka, who lives on a hill (*kande*) called Indigollae Kande which never has been seen. Indigollae Yaka is first invoked at the *Nae Yaku* ceremony and with him come the *Nae Yaku*. An *ande* is used in calling upon Indigollae Yaka in this ceremony, while the *Nae Yaku* are invoked by means of a cloth and beads; as among other Veddas an offering of food is made.

We could not discover with certainty at Dambani what was the relative importance of the *Nae Yaku* and the two other classes of *yaka*, but at Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle our informants made it quite clear that the *yaku* of recent ancestors were the most important. Thus Kuma stated that he considered his father's *yaka* to be the most important of all and that this spirit was invoked alike to send game and in thanks for game killed.

Bandia of Wellampelle said the most important *yaka* he knew was Punchi Badena, his father's father; his mother is dead but her *yaka* is not so important[1]. Punchi Badena is invoked to get game and honey or when people are sick. At all three villages a structure, which from the description given to us resembles an *alutyakagama*, is built for the invocation of the *Nae Yaku*, to whom the customary offerings are made before

[1] We have no note that the father of Kuma was dead; although we do not remember definitely inquiring about this our impression is that both parents had been dead for some time.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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775 being eaten by the community. A man becomes a *yaka* directly
782 he is dead, nothing is buried with him and the contents of his betel pouch are used in the ordinary way. The *Nat Yaku* ceremony is held some days after death, one, or according to another informant two, *ande* being used.

796 At Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle neither Bilindi Yaka nor Bambura Yaka was known, and these two *yaku* were also unknown at Dambani where, however, the Belligala Arachi said that Kande Yaka gives luck in hunting. This has been confirmed by Mr Hartshorne's notes, so that although our informants at Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle stated that they did not know this *yaka*, too much stress must not be laid upon this.

The other two classes of *yaku* invoked at Dambani are
796 tree and rock *yaku*. Both send sickness and are invoked with
753 dancing and offerings to remove it, the stone magic described on p. 143 being used to determine which *yaka* is responsible for the disease. The most important rock *yaku* are Mawaragala Yaka, Rerangala Yaka, Barutugala Yaka, and Mehaluku Yakini. The latter is associated with a rock Batugala near Alutnuwara, the others with the peaks whose names they bear.

796 Two tree *yaku* were mentioned, each having a number of attendants. These tree *yaku* are named Na Gaha Yaka (Na tree Yaka) and Bo Gaha Yaka (Bo tree Yaka), that is to say they are called after the trees with which they are associated, and the Arachi pointed out that tree *yaku* habitually lived in trees of the species after which they are named. We could not
[624] discover any facts suggesting that these tree *yaku* were considered to represent the life of the tree.

HORABORAWEWA.

796 The surroundings and physical characters of the Veddas of
775 Horaborawewa have been described on p. 53. The shaman is the local Sinhalese headman, who stated that the same *yaku* are invoked by Veddas and Sinhalese alike. Seren (Riri) Yaka is the most important *yaka*, Wiloya Yaka and Kalu Yaka are also known, and it was stated that the latter spirit was also called Wangata Yaka. Our informant had not heard of Kande Yaka or Bilindi Yaka, and it was certain that the worshipped *yaku*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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were generally associated with rocks and were not the spirits of the dead. There is however an exception, namely, Dehigole Yaka, whose history is as follows. A man from Dehigole, a Vedda, went to Kandy to see the king, probably Sri Vikram Rajah Sinha, the last of the Sinhalese kings, who was dethroned early in the last century. On his way back he was killed by an elephant, and now his spirit looks after the chena and prevents elephants breaking into and destroying the crops. A leafy branch is tied to a pole or dead tree in the chena, and Dehigole Yaka and other spirits are invoked, an offering of sweetmeats, jaggery, coconuts and rice cooked in coconut milk being made and subsequently eaten by the owners of the chena. There was said to be no invocation of the *yaku* of the recent dead, nor before taking honey which is obtained from trees.

LINDEGALA.

The "Veddas" described on p. 76 from Lindegala in the neighbourhood of Kallodi worship a large number of male and female spirits including the Bo Gaha Yaka and the Na Gaha Yaka[1].

As already indicated the people of Lindegala are Veddas in scarcely more than name. The most important of them, an old man with his son and son-in-law, visited us at Kallodi. The old man who is tall and presented typical Sinhalese features is a renowned *vederala* (medicine-man) and is employed by the Sinhalese for miles round. He brought with him to show us two ceremonial arrows with which he invoked the spirits. One of these arrows is of the shape of a Hindu trident, the other is of the usual Vedda shape and is notable on account of the silver *bo* leaf with which the blade is inlaid. This *aude* is shown in Plate XXV. Both of these had been presented by the Sinhalese king to one of his ancestors, apparently about 100 years ago.

[1] Although these *yaku* were spoken of in the singular there were many individuals of each species. Some of the other more important *yaku* which were worshipped were named, Wategala Wanniya, Gala Degala Wanniya, Gurugala Wanniya, Maldampahe Yaka, Lepet Yaka, Kheregala Yaka, Meheregal Yaka, Kemal Yaka, Walmet Yaka, Hillihangala Yaka, Mikmal Naida Yaka, Kahelpotegala Yaka, Mawaragala Yaka, Herang Yaka, Inihangala Wanniya, Mulahangala Wanniya, Gara Rajah Wanniya. These were only an insignificant fraction of the total number of *yaku* known to our oldest informant.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
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411 778 173

The story told us was that when this ancestor, who was a Vedda headman and a shaman of great fame, gave up his jungle life and began to cultivate, the Sinhalese king sent him the two *aude* as tokens that he granted the land on which he settled to him and his descendants for ever. It seems that previously to this they had led a more or less unsettled life, or had perhaps been dispossessed of their own territory during the troubles of the period. The arrows were in fact "seisin" and were considered the equivalent of a *sannasa*, the inscribed metal plate or rock face on which grants of land were formerly recorded. Inquiry showed that it was by no means uncommon for a man to be given a ceremonial example of an implement of his trade or profession as a *sannasa*. Thus, in the Kandy Museum there is a beautifully worked Bull's bell (*gonminigediya*) given as *sannasa* to Rantun Mudianse of Walala head of the Pattiya or Nilamakkara people by King Narendara Singhe of Kundasale who reigned 1706—1739. We may also refer to a ceremonial weaver's shuttle in the Colombo Museum and to the lacquered arrows described in Chapter XI.

776 775

The *Nae Yaku*, Kande Yaka, and Wanegata Yaka are considered less important than the tree *yaku* and the host of *yaku* alluded to above. Indigollae Yaka and Rahu Yaka are recognised but not considered very powerful, though it was said that all these were formerly invoked to give success in hunting. The *kolamaduwa* ceremony is known, very many spirits being invoked including Unapane Kiriamma. The *Nae Yaku* become attendants on some of the *yaku* mentioned in the above list and these are invoked first and bring the *Nae Yaku* with them, but it appeared that it was no longer the custom to hold a *Nae Yaku* ceremony within a few days of a death. Among the *Nae Yaku* mentioned was the spirit of the man on whom one of the last Sinhalese kings had bestowed the land of which the inlaid *aude* shown in Plate XXV is the *sannasa*. Another *yaku* greatly venerated is that of Kimbul Otbe, an important individual living a few generations ago concerning whom Nevill has written at some length[1].

[1] Nevill, who says that he could find no clue to his identity, still regarded Kimbul Otbe as "a great historical personage," for "The Sinhalese of the Eastern Provinces

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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KALUKALAEBA.

The most important spiritual agencies are the following:— Gange Bandar Deyo, Kataragam Deyo, Indigollae Yaka, Rerang Yaka, Riri Yaka (Sinhalese), Marulu Yaka, Rahu Yaka, and Elle Yakini.

In spite of the fact that the people of Kalukalaeba keep cattle and are predominantly agriculturalists Gange Bandar Deyo, who lives on the hill Yangala beyond Hemberewa and gives luck in hunting and honey gathering, was said to be especially important. He is invoked when game is scarce, but it is the Kataragam God who gives increase of yams and vegetable food. They do not dance to him but make offerings of cooked brinjal and pumpkins, which are left for half-a-day on a rude altar and then eaten. Chena are also under the protection of the Kataragam God to whom offerings are made after the produce has been reaped, some of every kind of fruit being cooked and exposed in the chena for some hours before it is eaten by the people.

At Kalukalaeba Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and Bambura Yaka were unknown. The spirits of the dead are recognised as the *Nae Yaku*, but they are certainly thought of as far less important than a number of other spiritual beings to be immediately considered. They are however invoked, but it seemed that this was not done habitually immediately after a death, but at quite uncertain intervals to remove sickness. The father of

and Bintenna, and Nilgala, alike agree that he was a great and powerful prince. They speak of him often, and call him Barangala Kimbul-Herat mudiyanse Rajapat Wanni-mache. From the name Herat it is manifest he headed some great political movement.... Raja-pat probably means king-maker, and the whole title may be translated as 'His Excellency the General Kimbul-Otbe of Barangala, the king-maker Lord-of-the-Marches,' or else the 'King-made Lord-of-the-Marches,' wanni, literally a forest or waste, being used exactly as we use the term 'marches,' of Wales or Scotland. The respect of the Sinhalese, and this elaborate title of highest honour, show that this great Vaedda Chieftain headed an army that replaced one of the Sinhalese kings upon the throne of his ancestors. I think it is more probable he figured in a comparatively modern war than in a very ancient one....It is perfectly likely that Kimbul-Otbe was a prince of the Sinhala royal family, who married a Vaedda....

"The supposition that Kimbul-Otbe was a Sinhala, and that he married either a Bandara or an Unapana lady, would thus account for the otherwise unexplained fact that the Sinhalese say some of their oldest and best families also descended from Kimbul-Otbe, though they did not know whether he was really a Vaedda or was claimed by the Vaeddas in mistake, having been their prince." *Op. cit.* Vol. i, p. 176.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775 the present shaman was called Suwanda, and no dance to his
755 spirit was held till a long time, perhaps as much as a year, after his decease. But when the shaman's mother became ill he was invoked and offerings were made, with the result that the patient got well. In connection with this it was explained that it was not
775 unusual for the *Nae Yaku* to make even their nearest and dearest
753 relatives ill for the sake of the offerings they would then receive.

It was stated that the *Nae Yaku* are not allowed to kill people but only to make them ill, permission to do this and to accept offerings being obtained from Kataragam Deyo, Saman Deyo, and Numeriya Deyo. We could not ascertain with
775 certainty whether the *Nae Yaku* have anything to do with sending luck in hunting, but if they are concerned in this they clearly play quite a subordinate part. When taking honey a little is left at the foot of the tree, this was said to be for the
[742] *Nae Yaku*, who may be called to it by some such expression as "here is honey, be pleased to eat[1]."

A female spirit Elle Yakini is invoked when a woman is
[843] pregnant, to protect mother and child; beads which belong to the shaman, who seems to keep them for this purpose, are placed on a piece of cloth and invocations are spoken. After
[844] childbirth a bower apparently resembling the *kolamaduwa* is made, Elle Yakini is invoked and an offering of food made to her. At the time of our visit it was said that a dance would shortly be held to Elle Yakini in thanks for having given a woman, who at first had difficulty in nursing her child, an abundant flow of milk. Elle Yakini will be invoked with an ordinary hunting arrow, and when possessed by her the shaman will gasp out some such formula as this "Now I have made you well, remember me in future." Offerings would not be made to Elle Yakini until her help was again needed.

ELAKOTALIYA.

776 The most important spiritual agencies are the gods and demons who are worshipped at Kalukalaeba. Indigollae Yaka is said to give good luck to hunters, for neither Kande Yaka,

[1] The geographical position of Kalukalaeba allows the Veddas of this group no opportunity of collecting rock honey.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Bilindi Yaka nor Bambura Yaka is known. The *Nae Yaku* are of the company of Indigollae Yaka, and with the latter are invoked after a death, but the *Nae Yaku* are not asked for good luck in hunting. The *Nae Yaku* are invoked after every death; coconut, jaggery (palm sugar), and rice are placed on a *maesa*, offered to the *yaku* and afterwards eaten by the shaman and other members of the community. While invoking the spirits the shaman holds a cloth in his hands but no *aude*.

ULPOTA.

The Kataragam God, Gane Deyo and Vihara Deyo, are worshipped, as probably are many others. These spirits are all considered more important than the *Nae Yaku*, and it is to their aid that success in hunting and in honey getting is largely attributed, nevertheless it was clear that the *Nae Yaku* were thought of as helpful in these activities. Our informant stated that they had never heard of Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, or Bambura Yaka, nor had they heard of the gods of the coast Veddas Kapalpe or Kadupe.

The spirits of the dead become *Nae Yaku*, and it is customary for a ceremony to be held eight days after a death, at which the spirits of all the recent dead are invoked. It was said that these spirits of the deceased joined the other *Nae Yaku* without asking permission from any other spiritual being and that the *Nae Yaku* came when they were invoked unaccompanied by any other spirit. The shaman does not hold an *aude* in his hand when invoking the *Nae Yaku*, but some rice and cooked pumpkin are put upon a *maesa* before which he dances. At the side of this is a pot of rice covered with a cloth supported on a rice pounder. The shaman faces the east whilst dancing, and appeals to all remembered *Nae Yaku* by name. It was said to be rare for any but the shaman to become possessed.

The *Nae Yaku* give honey and luck in hunting, and it is in order to obtain their favour that they are invoked, for if they were not they would give bad luck. When collecting tree honey the name of a dead man is called and he is requested to accept a little honey which is left at the foot of the tree for a short time, after which it is eaten by the honey gatherers. After killing game

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

a piece of flesh is offered to the *Nae Yaku* who are called by name, and then the Veddas eat it themselves.

Vihara Deyo is considered to send sickness, and he is invoked to make men whole again. Rice is cooked with milk usually obtained from the Tamil village of Horawila, and this with betel and areca nut is put upon a *maesa*. Only the shaman dances, and after the ceremony the offering is eaten by the whole community, including the sick man. Our informant did not know how the *yaka* or *deyo* causing the sickness was discovered, that being left to the shaman.

YAKURE.

The important spiritual agencies are:—Gange Bandar Deyo, Genikandia Deyo, Palugamman Deyo, Vihara Deyo, Mangara Deyo. Our informants knew of Indigollae Yaka but did not know if he ever was a man or had always been a spirit. Nothing was known of Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, or Bambura Yaka. Dead shamans are thought to become *yaku*, and it is the spirits of these people who are the *Nae Yaku*: the fate of the spirits of ordinary folk is uncertain, but they do not become *Nae Yaku*. The *Nae Yaku* are danced to and invoked with the other *yaku* in order to cure sickness, but apparently they are not considered particularly important. A *maesa* is made and a cloth put over it, and on it are laid flowers of many kinds, betel leaves and areca nuts. Incense is burned before these offerings, in front of which the shaman dances facing the east. In some instances the *maesa* is built inside the temple, the shaman holds a cloth in his hand and a pot of rice cooked in milk is placed by the *maesa* on a rice pounder[1]. This is not tasted during the dance, but is eaten afterwards by the shaman and the sick man and other individuals of the community[2].

Kataragam Deyo is invoked especially to protect the chena, and at harvest an offering is made which is afterwards eaten as at Elakotaliya.

[1] It must be remembered that Yakure is a great cattle breeding centre.

[2] This is an interesting contrast to the practice which Mr Parker informs us prevails in the south of the island, where food given to spirits is not eaten at all but is exposed in the jungle or some deserted place. The fact that at Yakure food offered to spirits, many of whom are of Sinhalese or Tamil origin, is eaten, is clearly a remnant of the Vedda belief that the spirits invoked are in the main beneficent.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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Mangara Deyo is invoked to protect cattle. About a month before our visit a nephew of the shaman suffered from headache and fever and woke up in the middle of the night in a great state of alarm. It was ascertained by stone augury that Mangara Deyo had sent the sickness, offerings were made to him, and the youngster speedily recovered.

There are no dances at a man's death or invocations to the spirits of the dead, nor did there appear to be any particular spirit who gave luck in hunting, indeed it seemed that game was little sought, the whole activity of the community being concentrated on cattle breeding.

The temple of Mangara Deyo is a small bare hut, with the roof projecting a few feet beyond that wall in which the door is cut. The inside of the temple is quite bare except for a narrow wooden rack about a foot wide which runs round the two side and back walls at a height of about four feet from the ground. In one corner of this was a pile of *anda* of all shapes and sizes which were said to belong to Mangara Deyo.

ROTAWAEWA.

Mr G. W. Jayawardene writes as follows concerning the beliefs of the Tamankaduwa "Veddas" described on p. 56. "They regard Adukganna Hulawali Yaka and Vedi Yaka as the important *yaku*. Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit to whom they look to be cured of sickness. When any one is ill he or she or someone on their behalf puts aside one or two cents which are wrapped in a clean piece of cloth and from each house an offering of food is made. Vedi Yaka is the spirit they look to for help in getting game. When an animal is killed the heart is taken and roasted and offered on a stick with the end split into four to hold the heart under a tree." Commenting on this Mr B. Horsburgh writes, "Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit of a Vedda who was killed by King Mahasena for refusing to leave Minneriya tank when he was going to restore it. The name Adukganna Hulawaliyaka means Hulawali Yaka who takes the *adukkuwa* or present of food (from the offering made to him). He is only seen in dreams,

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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when he takes the shape of a well made young man dressed in white and with a white stick in his hand. Vedi Yaka also appears only in dreams, as a black man in a cloth with nothing else particular about him[1]."

The Avoidance of Certain Foods.

It must be assumed that the following prohibitions are of a religious or of a magico-religious nature, and for this reason they are included in the present chapter. They do not appear to be connected with totemism, yet we do not feel confident that they are derived from Hinduism, as is suggested by the Sarasins[2]. In this doubt we have the support of Mr Parker who writes: "This prohibition appears to have no connection with Hinduism, or the common Brown Monkey, *Rilawā* (*Macacus pileatus*), would be included, and also the Rat, as the vāhana of Ganēsa, and the Turtle as representative of Vishnu; or some of these[3]."

Bailey writes, "The Veddahs eat the flesh of elk, deer, monkeys, pigs, the iguana, and pengolin—all flesh indeed, but that of oxen, elephants, leopards, and jackals; and all birds, except the wild or domestic fowl. They will not touch lizards, bats, or snakes.

"They can assign no reason for their abstinence from the flesh of these beasts and birds which I have enumerated, but their objection to beef and fowls, though quite unexplained, is decidedly the most marked, so much so that during my inquiries I found that they spontaneously expressed their antipathy, though it required cross examination to elicit the fact that they also avoid the other kinds of flesh[4]."

We are able to confirm Bailey's statement as far as it concerns the flesh of mammals, with the reservation that most Veddas do not eat porcupine. With regard to birds, the Veddas of Henebedda said they would not eat fowls or eagles. The majority of Veddas, including even the degenerate Veddas of the coast, avoid eating fowl, though many of the settled village Veddas keep them for sale or for the sake of their eggs, and in

[1] Both the passages quoted are from a report by Mr Hornbrugh to the Colonial Secretary.

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 413.

[3] *Ancient Ceylon*, p. 191.

[4] *Op. cit.* pp. 283 and 282.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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769 us in danger, sickness etc.' When we enquired whether their
177 dead lived on as spirits he replied, they did not consider whether
[775] the departed were living or dead, they were just spirits, in Tamil *sami* or *dewi*, in Sinhalese *yako*; all spirits were alike, neither good nor bad. Another coast Vedda named Patiniya told us that their religion was that of the Tamils. In memory of their dead, whom they called *yako*, they cooked rice and ate it; they invoked the *yaka* in sickness, etc.[1]"

761 Just as Kapalpei sent sickness, so death was also attributed
753 to him, but perhaps not epidemics, for it appeared to be generally
776 considered that a single death would satisfy him for the time, so that it would be days or weeks before he would be expected to send sickness or death again.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 498.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
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114 if they have even any language. "Some," he says, "are so degraded that it has appeared doubtful whether they possess any language whatever; and not only is their dialect incomprehensible to a Singhalese, but even their communications with each other are made by signs, grimaces, and guttural sounds, which bear little or no resemblance to distinct words or systematized language."* I can only say that I have been repeatedly among the very wildest of the race—indeed the "wretched outcasts," here so summarily deprived of the power of speech, are those whom I have been endeavouring to describe, and I never knew one of them at a loss for words sufficiently intelligible to convey his meaning, not to his fellows only, but to the Singhalese of the neighbourhood, who are all, more or less, acquainted with the Veddah patois.

775 [681] The Veddahs have no idea of a future state of rewards and punishments; for the vague vestige of a belief in retributive justice, which I have before mentioned, cannot be said to show any faith in the punishment by a Superior Power of sinners in this world.

114 It has been most truly said that it is a matter of almost insuperable difficulty to arrive at a proper understanding of the creed of barbarous tribes through the medium of direct questioning, and that nothing can be more vague than all their statements on this most important subject.†

771 It is not to be wondered at that a people so barbarous as the Veddahs are—without literature of any kind—who have lived in the depth of the forests in almost complete seclusion for centuries on centuries, should be incapable themselves of giving any definite or intelligent account of what they do believe. They are unable to express in language their ideas on subjects, which, even in their own minds, have never assumed any distinct form; and though they are ready enough to answer the questions put to them, it is no easy task so to frame them as to make their object intelligible to such rude and unlettered savages. The result

776 of the most patient inquiry is, that the Veddahs have a vague belief in a host of undefined spirits, whose influence is rather for good than for evil. Still, vague as this belief is, not even the

* Tennent, vol. ii, pt. ix, c. iii, p. 441, 2nd ed. This is stated on the authority of "a gentleman who resided long in their vicinity, G. R. Mercer, Esq., of the Civil Service, who held office at Badulla." Those who remember that gentleman's love of a practical joke, will smile at seeing this "joke" gravely recorded in the *Physical, Historical, and Topographical Account of the Island of Ceylon*, by Sir J. Emerson Tennent, K.C.S., LL.D., etc.; and my able predecessor, Mr. Mercer, must have been as much amused at seeing it there, as any one else.

† See Hodgson's "Brief Note on Indian Ethnology," Bengal Asiatic Society's *Journal*, March 1849.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
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wildest Veddahs are without an "instinct of worship." They believe that the air is peopled by spirits, that every rock and every tree, every forest and every hill, in short every feature of nature, has its *genius loci*; but these seem little else than mere nameless phantoms, whom they regard rather with mysterious awe than actual dread. 776

Such appears to be the form which the superstitions of every savage tribe naturally assume,—the necessity for a belief in something more than human, imparting to the commonest objects a supernatural character. But besides this vague spirit-worship, they have a more definite superstition, in which there is more of system. This is the belief in the guardianship of the spirits of the dead. Every near relative becomes a spirit after death, who watches over the welfare of those who are left behind. These, which include their ancestors and their children, they term their "néhya yakoon," kindred spirits. They describe them as "ever watchful, coming to them in sickness, visiting them in dreams, giving them flesh when hunting." In short in every calamity, in every want they call on them for aid; and it is curious that the shades of their departed children, "bilindoo yakkoon," or infant spirits, as they call them, are those which they appear most frequently to invoke.* 776 775 769

It is a pretty belief, and contrasts favourably with the superstitions of the Kandyans, who have spirits enough in their system, but almost all thoroughly malignant, and needing constant propitiation. But the Veddah spirit-world is singularly free from evil. I can find only one *absolutely* malignant spirit in it whom they really fear;† though, like all savages, they have an undefined awe of the nameless spirits whom they believe to haunt the darkness. The shades of their ancestors and of their children seem to be purely benevolent. The ceremonies with which they invoke them are few as they are simple. The most common is the following. An arrow is fixed upright in the ground, and the Veddah dances slowly round it, chanting this invocation, which is almost musical in its rhythm. 769 776 782

"Mâ miya, mâ miy, mâ deyâ'
Topang koyihetti mittigan yandâ'h!" [539]

* They also speak of them as "witera yakkoon," "child-spirits." They seem to prefer their great-grandmother (maha kiri amma) to the rest of their defunct ancestors; but I cannot ascertain any cause for their preference for the old lady. I may, however, be wrong in describing it as a preference. It may be the reverse, for she is invoked chiefly in cases of sickness, when the patient is supposed to be suffering from the malignity of a spirit. [753]

† Awiramada Yakko, who especially injures women, lying wait for them in the forest.

2;Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
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no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to protect their votive offerings. [782] [796] [346]

They have no system of medicine, though they will accept medicine when given. In cases of sickness they sprinkle water on the patient, invoking their deceased ancestors to heal him. Sometimes they simply utter the name of spirits as they dance round the sick man. Sometimes a garland of flowers is offered to the spirit who has afflicted him.* They believe in the efficacy of what are called devil dances, but are ignorant of the art of a Kattadia, or devil dancer. I can find no trace of metempsychosis, so universal amongst Buddhists. [755] [769] [775]

I have now described what is the *actual* religious belief, if it can be so called, of the Veddahs; and it was only by dint of often repeated visits among them, and very careful inquiry, that I succeeded in obtaining the particulars I have recorded. [771] [774]

But, that at some period of their history they had some knowledge of a more "systematized" faith, their charms and invocations, some of their customs, and the very names they bear, seem conclusively to prove.

Such testimony is invaluable. For neither the inquirer, whose zeal may induce him to jump too hastily at conclusions, nor the people themselves, can distort it, or give it a strained interpretation. But this evidence all points to something long past, to a faith once, at least, familiar to them, but now forgotten. At the least, it indicates a former contact with civilization, and proves that they have a history more full of incident than would belong to a race which was always as barbarous as it is now.†

In their charms the sun and moon are frequently invoked, although in their daily life neither luminary is respected.‡ [821]

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* They invoke the Gal-Yakko, spirit of the rock; Wedde-Yakko, spirit of the chase; Oonapána-Yakko, of whom I have no knowledge; and the shade of their great-grandmother. They also propitiate "Maha-Yakkhini" who appears rather an evil personage. It is to her that they offer a garland of flowers. They describe her as a "foreigner", and say that they know nothing about her, but acquired their awe of her from the Singhalese. The Wedd-Yakko is known to the Singhalese; hunters offer flowers, blood, and burnt meat to this spirit, before hunting, to secure their success. Oonapána-Yakko is known to the Singhalese of the Weddirates, but I do not think he is generally known to the Singhalese.

† Vide Tennent's account of the Veddahs, especially vol. ii, part iii, chap. ix, p. 441-2. "They have no knowledge of a God, nor of a future state, no temples, no altars, prayers, or charms; in short, no 'instinct of worship' except, it is reported, some ceremonies analogous to devil worship."

‡ This occurs in several charms. The following (which, though not known to the Singhalese, as applied to *wild boars*, is identical with one known to them to drive away toothache), not only invokes the sun and moon, [789]